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ABSTRACT

The use of law, force, social pressure, and other forms of compulsion to "encourage" lifelong learning and to expand the market for adult education has been a growing concern for many adult educators. Because of the proliferation of requirements for mandatory continuing education (MCE), a task force was formed to study MCE, and to mobilize opinion against it. The eight papers presented in this task force report represent the studies conducted, and the opinions generated, in opposition to MCE. Topics discussed include a rationale for voluntary adult education rather than MCE: MCE and the knowledge explosion: the implications of MCE on democracy: the ethics of MCE: the failure of the MCE approach for education for the poor: and a portrait of individuals who have been forced to attend adult education and have failed. A literature review of research on MCE for professionals is included. Task force participants and a statement of the task force purpose are also included. (KC)

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# TASK FORCE REPORT

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## AEA/USA Task Force on Voluntary Learning

**November 1980**

**Chicago**

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**Editor:** ..... **THOMAS W. HEANEY**


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While the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the official view of AEA/USA, the association does support the concept of providing the opportunity for various groups to present their views on important issues.

# PREFACE

## BACKGROUND

The use of law, force, social pressure, and other forms of compulsion to "encourage" lifelong learning and to expand the market for adult education has been a growing concern of many adult educators. As requirements for mandatory continuing education (MCE) proliferate, so have the voices of dissent raised among the ranks of educators who seek a balance between maximum free learning and minimum instruction. A chronology of the most recent history of that dissent follows.

October-November 1977. At the Adult Education Conference in Detroit, delegates from across the nation and from Canada took part in a series of earnest conversations on the issue of MCE. They were brought together by a shared conviction that "participation in adult education should be a voluntary matter." In this, they were aligning themselves with the UNESCO position adopted at the 1976 International Conference in Nairobi, Kenya. The meetings on MCE had been convened by John Ohliger and Basic Choices, Inc., a midwest center for clarifying political and social options. Although these meetings were not scheduled as part of the regular proceedings, the concerns they addressed were highlighted by Roby Kidd, then Secretary General of the International Council for Adult Education, who warned the assembled delegates in his keynote address that

> Instead of a careful review of what is happening, some adult educators have accepted the legislation (for MCE) with approval or with glee. It seems that we are patheticall-y pleased to be wanted, to be recognized even for the wrong reason, and we have been quick to see that in the short run there may be money to be made by offering programs to people who are legally compelled to attend some activities.

June 1979. As a result of recommendations which emerged at the Detroit conference, Basic Choices began planning for a national organizational meeting to mobilize energy against the MCE tide. The meeting was held at the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee. Participants included not only adult educators, but lawyers, medical technicians, nurses, librarians, and others representing professional and social groups already being forced back into school. The Highlander meeting resulted in the formation of the National Alliance for Voluntary Learning (NAVL) whose major goal has been to support the ideal of lifelong learning, while rejecting the notion of lifelong schooling.

November 1979. The second national meeting of NAVL occurred at the AEA Conference in Boston. Among the many NAVL-sponsored initiatives at the Boston Conference was a resolution placed before the Delegate Assembly to reaffirm the UNESCO declaration that "participation in adult education should be a voluntary matter." This resolution was the longest and most hotly debated by the 1979 Assembly. In the end a roll-call vote showed the resolution was defeated. A number of delegates observed that this resolution would have been quickly and easily endorsed four days earlier, before NAVL's efforts had sparked debate concerning the role of MCE in the production of "more careers for educators."

A second resolution was put before the Assembly to establish a Task Force on Voluntary Learning. This resolution passed and the following summary report and documentation are the first to be published by that Task Force.

## THE TASK FORCE BEGINS

A regional meeting of the Task Force was convened in early April 1980 to discuss strategies for preparation of a report to the November meeting of the Association in St. Louis. Planning began for a national meeting of the Task Force in September at which the report would be drafted. The site chosen for the meeting was Madison, Wisconsin—the home of Basic Choices which had reintroduced the issue of MCE to the AEA four years earlier. Invitations to prepare brief "position papers" were sent to adult educators in ten uni-

versities across the United States and Canada—papers which could provide theoretical and empirical background for the Madison meeting. An additional general invitation for papers was published in Adult and Continuing Education Today (10:13) and in Second Thoughts (2:3), the newsletter of NAVL and Basic Choices. A provisional list of questions to be addressed in these papers was drafted:

1) How pervasive is MCE? To what extent do its requirements reach across social classes?
2) What are the historical and philosophical foundations of adult education which support voluntary learning? Which support MCE?
3) What are the effects of MCE on learners?

4) What is the meaning of "voluntary" and "mandatory in relation to learning and education?
5) What research findings are available on the effectiveness of MCE? What do we know about the results when education is imposed on adults?

Notice of the Task Force and its work was sent to all members of NAVL and to persons who had expressed interest—over 350 in all. The September meeting was open to anyone wishing to attend, with the understanding that participation in the meeting would constitute membership on the Task Force. The meeting was held at St. Benedict Center in Madison on 5-7 September.

Not all of the questions raised were addressed and considerable work remains to be done (see the Task Force Resolutions), but eight papers were received and distributed to all who had pre-registered for the meeting.

## THE MADISON CONFERENCE

The sedate atmosphere of St. Benedict Center proved an excellent choice for the gathering of the Task Force. After renewing and making acquaintances, the group settled down on the first evening to develop its own agenda for the two days to follow. They heard from Task Force Chair, Tom Heaney, concerning the mandate of the AEA and the purpose of the report which the group had gathered to prepare.

The position papers provided an introduction to the issues and throughout the next two days discussion focused on the identification and analysis of themes generated by the papers. Although initial calls for papers had sought a balance between philosophical and empirical approaches to forced adult learning, clearly the papers submitted gave greater emphasis to the philosophical side of the debate. Concern was expressed at the lack of "hard" research evaluating MCE and its consequences.

Concern that the group's work was thereby deficient was balanced by the concern of those who saw the central issue to be an ethical, rather than a technical problem. A danger was noted in reducing the matter of forced learning to the empirical question of effectiveness. Non-effectiveness, once demonstrated, could be countered with improved techniques (drugs, subliminal television, etc.), but the increased efficiency would not eliminate objections set forth in the position papers and in the statement of the Task Force itself.

The group determined that its own work would

best synthesize and distill the "positions" taken in the papers and in the discussion which these papers inspired. Such a statement of the group could serve the reader of this report as a "map" to the more documented elaborations contained in the papers themselves. This statement, drafted at the Madison Conference, provides an introduction to the papers which are included in this report in their original form.

## THE TASK FORCE

Jerold Apps, University of Wisconsin—Madison
Jack Blaney, Simon Fraser University
Robert Carlson, University of Saskatchewan
Diana M. Carminati, Beeman School, New Haven, VT
Phyllis Cunningham, Northern Illinois University
Ana K. Dale, American Bar Association
Michael Day, University of Michigan—Ann Arbor
David Gueulette, Northern Illinois University
James Hawking, Chicago Urban Skills Institute
Thomas W. Heaney, Northern Illinois University
Aimee I. Horton, University of Illinois—Circle
Kenneth Lehman, University of Wisconsin—Madison
David Lisman, University of Wisconsin--Madison
Gisela Mengin, Chicago
John Ohliger, Basic Choices, Inc.
Helen Parris, University of Saskatchewan
Kathleen Rockhill, University of California at Los Angeles
Leslie Rothaus, American Institutes for Research
Jerry Sather, PACE Institute, Cook County Jail
Fred M. Schied, Chicago Urban Skills Institute
Robert Smith, Northern Illinois University
David Williams, Penn State University

# STATEMENT

## TASK FORCE CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING...

### HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS,

**1**

Since its founding in 1926, the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE) and its successor, the Adult Education Association (AEA), have always advocated voluntary continuing education. This tradition was abruptly broken in 1979 when the AEA rejected the UNESCO resolution that "participation in an adult education programme should be a voluntary matter." (1,5,22) *

**2**

Compulsory adult education is incompatible with the ideals of social democracy and furthers totalitarian, monolithic tendencies in our society. Much of the adult education in the United States is undertaken by non-formal, volunteer organizations which are crucial to democratic freedom. (12,13)

### PROFESSIONALIZATION,

**3**

Mandatory continuing education (MCE) perpetuates professional autonomy at the expense of consumers who, through lack of "appropriate knowledge," are presumed incapable of knowing the questions to which professionals have the answers. (7,12,22)

**4**

This Task Force supports continuing education, both formal and non-formal, both organized by professional educators and self-directed. The argument against MCE is with forced systems of learning and the use of adult educators to ostensibly police professional practice. (7,13,22)

**5**

Certification, recertification, licensure, and credentialing are examples of contexts within which MCE is legitimized. Certification, recertification, licensure, and credentialing, in and of themselves, serve to sustain a professional caste, and fail to insure accountability to the public. (5,10,22)

**6**

Mandatory continuing education lulls the unexpecting public into unwarranted assumptions about the competence of professionals. Mandated education is an inappropriate response to those who demand recertification or relicensure. Research has established no significant correlation between mandated education and competence. (6,11,12, 15,22)

### RESEARCH,

**7**

The question concerning the value of MCE cannot be resolved by research alone. The issue does not hinge on the empirical question of effectiveness, but on ethical and philosophical questions crucial to the practice of adult education. (9,10,21,22)

### INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS,

**8**

Mandatory continuing education endangers free and spontaneous learning through the imposition of minimum standards. Forced participation in continuing education programs stifles and substitutes for more creative and/or self-directed learning projects. (9,12,22)

**9**

The very process of approving courses to meet the requirements of MCE may result in a lack of flexibility and be counterproductive to the professed ideal of keeping abreast of current developments. (9,12,22)

### PEDAGOGY,

**10**

The so-called "knowledge explosion" is often cited as the primary justification for MCE. This concept of knowledge is derived from a technocratic view of the world that reduces learning to only what is quantifiable and consumable and demeans those learning experiences which fit neither of these prescriptions. (7,11, 12)

**11**

Compulsory schooling assumes a behaviorist view of human nature in which values and behaviors are subjected to manipulation by forced sitting in classroom laboratories. (8,9,12)

**12**

The behaviorist model, which assumes that competency can be defined and performance measured, is only one way to view competency. (8,9,12)

### AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES.

**13**

A related rationale for MCE is that promoting technical expertise will improve the quality of life through expanding material resources. However, developing and expanding material resources does not guarantee their equitable distribution in a class stratified society. (10,13)

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* Numbers refer to pages in this report

**14**

Countless studies indicate that more schooling reinforces conformity and acquiescence to institutions rather than the desire to pursue self-directed learning projects. (9,12,22)

# Resolutions:

**1**

That the Delegate Assembly of the Adult Education Association reaffirm its 1977 endorsement of UNESCO's Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education, and specifically that document's provision that "participation in an adult education programme should be a voluntary matter."

**2**

That the AEA Delegate Assembly maintain its Task Force on Voluntary Learning with the following assigned tasks for 1980-1981: a) Contact major professional groups which have mandatory continuing education requirements to develop a coalition which will foster interprofessional group action for studying MCE. b) Coordinate and obtain funding for research related to MCE. c) Develop and report on alternatives to MCE at the 1981 AEA Conference.

**3**

That the AEA Board examine, add to, delete from, and prioritize the research agenda of the Task Force on Voluntary Learning as needed. Further, that the AEA Board seek funding in cooperation with the Task Force to support this research agenda.

**4**

That the AEA Board of Directors inform all commissions, sections, and affiliates of the importance of the MCE issue and encourage these groups to investigate the issues involved.

**5**

That the Program Planning Committee for the 1981 AEA Conference provide time and space for the Task Force on Voluntary Learning to present a major session on the MCE issue.

# THE PAPERS

## On Behalf of Voluntary Adult Education

**by MICHAEL DAY**

Compulsory adult education is a repulsive idea. It always has been. Forcing individuals to further their education—undisguised in the case of mandatory continuing professional education, somewhat concealed in promotion considerations which require advanced degrees or certification—is antithetical to the ideals which the early American adult education movement cherished.

Imagine for a moment Benjamin Franklin—who has been referred to as the patron saint of adult education (Grattan, 1971:140)—being compelled either by crown or colony to return to school to update his printing skills. Anyone familiar with the autobiography of this self-educated man knows how private and self-directed an affair learning was to Franklin. And so it was for Thoreau, whose experience at Walden Pond serves as a manifesto to self-reliance and self-directed study.

Franklin, Thoreau and numerous others have left us a noble legacy. They demonstrated that the totality of life, not merely its parody in institutions, is educative; institutions have no monopoly on learning. Mandatory continuing education negates this legacy. We soon forget that learning is much more than the program which we are coerced to attend. We forget that learning is voluntary; we have neither the freedom to choose what we wish to learn nor the opportunity to reject what we do not wish to learn.

Even chroniclers of the American adult education movement have endorsed voluntary, self-designed learning. James Truslow Adams, for example, in Frontiers of American Culture, defends the integrity of the individual and stresses again and again the voluntary nature of adult education. According to Adams, institutions like libraries and museums, because they cannot compel the public to use their services, characterize ideal and successful adult learning agencies. (Adams, 1944:251) C. Hartley Grattan, likewise, deals with the subject of voluntary learning in his classic work In Quest of Knowledge. He notes, "Participation in adult education...is and must remain a voluntary act." (1971:10)

Another defender of voluntary learning, perhaps the most significant ally yet mentioned, was the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE), predecessor of the Adult Education Association-USA. The Director's Reports and journal of this Association give strong evidence of unqualified support for voluntary learning. During its 25 years of existence (1926-49), the AAAE—self-appointed leader and critic of the newly emerging American adult education movement—staunchly supported the individual's right to freely participate in adult education. Morse Cartwright, executive director of the AAAE and its major spokesperson, frequently urged the position of the Association on voluntary learning:

> Since the founding of the Association (AAAE) in 1926, the larger portion of its energies and funds have been devoted to the task of assuring the greatest possible degree of free choice in educational opportunity for adults of whatever station. It may be truly said that our long record of experimentation and demonstration has been chiefly aimed at this objective. Our effort has been to open up and to explore new fields of adult educational opportunity. The range has been wide and we have kept it so, acutely conscious the while of the adage that 'one man's meat is another man's poison,' and firm in the belief that every individual possesses an inherent right to determine the kind and amount of education of which he will partake. (Cartwright, 1939:338)

> Discipline in schools for children rests solidly upon compulsory attendance maintained by both law and by parental authority. The adult school, whether it be called class or forum, must operate under new rules peculiarly its own. (Cartwright, 1933:343)

> ... we shall have borne in mind the fact, which cannot be too often repeated, that the adult is under no compulsion to exhibit the slightest interest in adult education. (Cartwright, 1936:4)

Though Cartwright played a dominant role in the Association, he was but one of many AAAE supporters who stressed the issue of voluntary learning. Lyman Bryson, a member of the executive board of the AAAE (1933-1949), was such a supporter. In his 1936 textbook on adult education, he states:

> We are helped toward an understanding of the spirit of the movement if we think of all adult education as voluntary. Self-direction is its most characteristic quality. (1936:4)

Another supporter was Eduard Lindeman, who

was one of the most provocative contributors to adult education literature and was on the executive board of the AAAE during its formative years (1926-1931). Lindeman writes:

> Adult education, happily, requires neither entrance nor exit examinations. Adult learners attend classes voluntarily and they leave whenever the teaching falls below their standard of interest. What they learn converges upon life, not upon commencement and diploma. The external tokens of education are removed so that the learning process may stand or fall on its intrinsic merits. (1961:114)

And more recently another cadre of writers has appeared to defend our legacy of voluntary, self-designed education. Educators such as Ronald Gross (1977), Ivan Illich (1972), and Paulo Freire (1970) serve as valuable links to our eminent past—their works are stimulating. Some of their ideas may make us uncomfortable, but their message should not; it is the same message which Franklin and Thoreau would endorse, which historians have found infused deeply into the early American adult education movement, which the American Association for Adult Education and its spokespeople such as Cartwright, Bryson, and Lindeman firmly proclaimed: Compulsory adult education is a repulsive idea.

We forget at times that mandatory continuing education is not an innocuous issue. We cannot, as adult educators and learners ourselves, close our eyes to it. It is not true that, in some areas, a little dab of mandatory continuing education may be necessary for a while. Either our concern is for the individual learner or it is not; if it is, then the individual's right to a variety of quality learning opportunities—programs, networks, institutions—and especially to accept or reject any or all of these opportunities must be respected.

Grattan once noted, "the idea of adult education has a way of appearing more attractive than the practice at a particular moment." (1971: 303) On the issue of non-voluntary learning, we must strive to make our practice live up to our ideals.

Finally, what position might the current AEA-USA take regarding voluntary learning? I feel that a review of the literature on our origins may be helpful. But for guidance on leadership, we might especially recall the words of Morse Cartwright:

> Surely leaders in adult education should be the last to wish to see local initiative destroyed, should be the first to object to the spoonfeeding of local communities, should be willing to fight to the last ditch to prevent regimentation and domination by centralized educational authority. Increased efficiency is far too inconsiderable an objective to be gained at the cost of sacrificing principles basic to the idea of freedom in the American democracy. (1939:341)

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# MCE: From Wanting to Learn to Learning to Want

**by DAVID C. WILLIAMS**

I.

I'd rather learn from
one bird how
to sing
than teach ten thousand
stars how not
to dance

-e.e.cummings-

Mandatory continuing education (MCE) may be 1) prescribed by professional or accreditation organizations, 2) legislated, or 3) tacit. In fact, it seems hardly important to discuss MCE without focusing attention on exactly who is doing the compelling.

Tacit MCE is not much needed where professional and accreditation bodies decree frequency and sometimes quality of participation in continuing education as a condition for relicensure. An extreme form—mandatory higher education (MHE?)—occurs when, for example, a local teachers' union prescribes that all district primary teachers complete a master's degree (in something) within five years of initial employment. Prescribed MCE can happen when professional groups—such as bar and medical associations—are themselves licensed or chartered by government to "police" and control access to their own ranks. Increasingly, taking up the MCE banner is a key to retaining such authority. Such "voluntary" compliance, notes Phillips (1980:4), may be a device to forestall or support legal mandate.

Legislated MCE entails enactment of laws or regulations by governmental assemblies or lawfully appointed government commissions. It comes clos-

est to Apps' condition (1979:65) that compulsory continuing education embraces those forced to "participate in specified educational opportunities in order to maintain their credentials." Examples include a state legislature passing into law a bill requiring certified public accountants to complete at least fifty continuing education units (CEUs) within the twelve months preceding application for relicensure, or a state cosmetology board mandating annual participation in at least two training workshops by instructors at accredited schools. Other legislated MCE forms may be attached to factors other than relicensure, such as qualification for physicians' malpractice insurance.

Tacit MCE is represented in "unwritten rules" by parole boards which look more favorably upon release applications by those incarcerated who involve themselves in some form of adult basic, vocational, or other education while "inside." Some tacit MCE, while possibly illegal, may carry the force of law. It shares attributes with secret membership requirements in fraternal orders and expectation of material support in exchange for favorable status with politicians. It is one way to gain influence, to enhance opportunity for mobility, and to create positive images, albeit pseudo-events (Boorstin, 1961). A further example stems from the myriad subtle pressures and more-than-casual suggestions that professionals—perhaps registered nurses, or architects, or mining engineers—may find pathways to success to be unfettered by "red tape" and more lucrative if enthusiasm typifies their responses to permanent schooling.

But tacit MCE possesses another dimension, which is controlled by an alternate sense of "mandatory." In alluding to MCE as "the Gold Rush of '76," Stern (1976) emphasizes that "the only way to avoid compulsory adult education was to get there first and to do it yourself, to keep on learning without being required to." Similarly, Phillips (1978) describes voluntary participation as the "first generation" in MCE. Without measuring the effect of and on such a generation, MCE proponents have created measurements for the unborn.

Persons learn, as species adapt, and adaptations are mandated by survival instincts and physical environments, not agencies, legislatures, and boards. What merit is there in prescribing averues of survival? Why add a handling charge—the purchase of CEUs—to what one can and probably has to handle oneself? How can one be so certain that voluntary learning (not just the usually measured voluntary participation in externally organized continuing education programs) doesn't work? Is the field of adult education confronting an iatrogenic effect— a cure that kills--by subordinating voluntary pursuit of education to compulsory and regulated attendance?

This inquiry confronts the progression of MCE's three forms with two quite disparate groups: licensed professionals and inmates in correctional facilities. While these two may have little in common with respect to socio-economic status and school attainment, they share, through MCE, impact from four socio-political trends in the United States: belief in obsolescence, challenges to competence, permanent schooling, and, most significantly, behaviorist learning theory.

## II.

> Whatever professional men may embrace and whatever species of property they may possess, one characteristic is common to them all. No one is fully contented with his present fortune; all are perpetually striving, in a thousand ways, to improve it. Consider any one of them at any period of his life, and he will be found engaged with some new project for the purpose of increasing what he has. Do not talk to him of the interests and the rights of mankind; this small domestic concern absorbs for the time all his thoughts and inclines him to defer political agitations to some other season. This not only prevents men from making revolutions, but deters men from desiring them.
>
> -de Tocqueville (1963:254)-

Unreflective belief that widespread obsolescence exists has become a commonplace. The concept is itself essentially reifying and dehumanizing in most usages because it complains of persons not keeping up with their machinery. Phillips (1980:3) observed, nonetheless, that "professional obsolescence" is the key factor currently in promoting legislated MCE for nineteen licensed professions.

Perhaps one can attribute this pervasiveness to popular cynicism, growing self-distrust among the schooled middle class, or belief in future shocks and knowledge explosions. Riesman (1979: 42) contends that "fear of decay is a recurrent theme in the history of civilization." Incursions by MCE extend a panacea, or perhaps a sacrificial lamb, to often legitimate concerns about malpractice, market manipulation, and environmental deterioration. MCE becomes subterfuge and smokescreen. Better guards are thought to make better prisons. Attention to fundamental questions about nuclear energy are distracted by offering up reactor operators to continual retooling via MCE.

In some eyes, prisoners have been cynically regarded as intentionally obsolete social residuum. In others they are viewed as vocationally deficient, marginally literate, sensorily deprived, or caught in a cultural crack (and by the long arm of the law). Time passes them by, and they pay in time. The disadvantaged-unconnected-disaffected are out-of-date with society's intentions, and MCE propels them into a brushing-up posture for a new shot at socialization.

As inmates may procure some sort of cleansing through MCE, so may decay be arrested by a profession. Bledstein (1976:4-5) details the precedence in mortuary science's metamorphosis:

> Only in America... did undertakers in the nineteenth century sever their historical ties with cabinet-makers, manufacturers of funeral furniture, and liverymen. They enhanced their prestige by calling themselves 'funeral directors,' proposing to provide a full personal service for the bereaved from the moment of a cherished one's death to the maintenance of a grave site. The professional importance of an occupation was exaggerated when the ordinary coffin became a 'casket,' the sealed repository of a precious object; when a decaying corpse

became a "patient" prepared in an "operating room" by an "embalming surgeon" and visited in a "funeral home" before being laid to rest in a "memorial park." In the 1890s, the title mortician appeared, suggested by the word physician, and the subject "mortuary science" soon entered the curriculum of accredited colleges.

Today, following higher education's lead, MCE is proposed for funeral directors in more than a dozen states. MCE finds itself at the end of a cycle involving obsolescence by aiding professions in renaming themselves, casting new images. The alternative to going out of business is raising one's sights, appearance, and, usually, price.

III.

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals or, if neither, mechanized petrification embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has obtained a level of civilization never before achieved!"

-Max Weber (1958:181)-

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and
everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the
worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

-William Butler Yeats (1924)-

Competence, of course, is very much related to notions of obsolescence, with shared concerns for keeping up with or maintaining some evolving standard. Its MCE applications are distinctive, however, in 1) association with the competency-based education (CBE) movement, and 2) narrowing of the meaning of competence to exclude essentially all variables except externally perceived performances

In MCE, competence is equated most often with specified sets of proficiencies. Throughout all recent United States educational thought and practice, such reaction seeks to counter sometimes unfairly normative and stiltedly abstract aspects of curricula. The meshing of criterion-referencing with stiltedly mundane activity analysis, via CBE, has nurtured an unfairness, a "blind spot" of its own. The behaviorist connection in CBE has been noted by others (Smith, 1975; Elias & Merriam, 1980: 88-99), and behaviorism itself is a later consideration of this inquiry. The important matter here is that behaviorism provides the common assumptions about the learner and the learner's needs. Its common vehicle, CBE, winds through primary-level mastery learning, minimum competency testing in secondary schools, and, in adult education, APL and competency-based ABE and continuing professional education. So those who have to be there are getting to see and touch a new educational ideology.

Numerous issues emerge. Can competencies be derived adaquately from task analysis? Residual American efforts date back at least to early in the century (Bobbitt, 1918). Boyd Bode (1927) noted their high regard to "science" and efficiency, as well as their obscuring of "the need to break from old standards." Houle (1980:32) cautions that CBE seems not to lend itself to instructional success in some areas:

**Enforced allegiance to external factors proffers an educational Geritol... To prolong schooling may be to immortalize the moribund.**

In recent years many educators have been interested in finding ways in which learners demonstrate the ability to perform well in either artificially contrived or natural settings. "Competency-based instruction" . . . is easiest to use when it is concerned with skills; it becomes more difficult when it is concerned with knowledge or sensitiveness.

What is competence, and what levels of it are officially acceptable? Banality suggests itself in government which sanctions, let alone mandates, credit accumulation through means not yet known to be effective (Task Force on Continuing Competence in Pharmacy, 1974; Kelman, 1978). Morris (1976) measured "performance" among engineers after continuing education as 1) more pay raises, 2) more promotions, and 3) more drive. Williams (1976:80) described one motivation for competence among inmates:

. . . vocational and academic schooling in prisons is not usually sought for the purpose of enhancing one's job possibilities, but to impress the keepers of the keys who may prescribe honor status or early release for one who performs adequately.

Often it is escape only to a higher form of boredom. Study of GED completion's impact on recidivism found little (Johnson et al., 1974). Nationally, the effectiveness of correctional treatment -- educational, vocational, psychological, and social -- has been challenged by others (Lipton et al., 1975).

Enforced allegiance to external factors -- those derived from kinetics observed -- proffers an educational Geritol. Its recipe blends meanings of ethical and competent practice, then bakes

for specified amounts of time. It gives process a backseat to product, deriding efforts to identify and study "enduring" (Hyman et al., 1975) and recurrent learning patterns (beyond recall on demand and simulation) in both subject matter ("content") areas and moral acquisition.

IV.

> Schools, other educational institutions, and now more adult education institutions define people as inadequate, insufficient, lacking, incomplete. You don't know something so you have to go to school for the temporary relief of your inadequacies.
>
> -John Ohliger (1974:47)-

Evidence that permanent schooling and lifelong learning are beginning to mean the same thing is overwhelming. Queeney and Manz (1979) counted fifty-five professional groups ripe for continuing education, if not already mandated to receive it. Pharmacy, nursing, psychology, medicine, and other fields report sharp trends toward distrusting volunteerism and heralding legislated mandate (Leuallen, 1969; Dubin, 1972; Pearlman, 1974; Phillips, 1978; Waddle, 1980). Similarly impacted groups include welfare recipients, traffic law violators, parents of delinquents, and correctional inmates.

To prolong schooling may be to immortalize the moribund. But more immediate issues arise: higher education's role and the political significance of maintaining for adults those systems and procedures developed for juveniles. Rockhill (1976:11) detected broad social consequences in "over-certification." Work by Gueulette (1976; 1972), Williams (1974), Frese (1972), and Ohliger (1971) isolates politically reactionary outcomes associated with permanent education. Their concerns span attention to education becoming a "total institution" (Goffman, 1961) and questions as to whether formal ("institutionalized") education systems should be supported at all. Illich (1975) illustrates the "common ground" of these critiques:

> The institutionalization of permanent education will transform society into an enormous planet-sized classroom watched over by a few satellites. Only the labels will enable one to distinguish it from an enormous hospital ward, from a planetary mental home and from a penitentiary universe, where education, punishment, medical care and imprisonment are synonymous.

Nonetheless, transnational shifts to permanent schooling proceed, with universities in the vanguard. Stern (1976:4) argues that if one condones "the desirability and inevitability of cultural conditioning," via schooling, for children, one must similarly encourage it for adults. Yet countless studies (e.g., Jackson, 1968; Apple, 1971; Reimer, 1971) indicate that more schooling reinforces conformity and acquiescence to institutional press rather than desire to pursue major learning efforts. Transforming the lifespan into continuous birth-to-death rites of passage may extend other aspects of juvenilization to adulthood. The image is one of parens patriae for grown-ups, with the state as guide from one ersatz maturation point to another.

Several writers cite the prominence of universities' "mercantile interests" in continuing education (Apps, 1980:7; Bowen, 1979; Stern, 1979, 1976:5; Ohliger, 1974). However, little attention by proponents seems directed at whether universities are structurally or philosophically prepared to meet the volunteer adult learner on his or her own terms. Official compulsion perhaps will assist the "non-traditional learner" in recognizing the university as "the greatest single source" (Frandson, 1975) of new knowledge in any profession. Also, MCE sets the stage for government and its universities to control entrepreneurs and related purveyors of continuing education.

V.

> . . . seen as an organism, man cannot be anything but a complex of things, of its, and the processes that ultimately comprise an organism are it-processes.
>
> -Ronald Laing (1969:21)-

Behaviorism is the dominant ideology of our age. Its influence goes far beyond adult education to form the conceptual underpinnings of how today's social institutions carry out their business. Whether welfare, formal education, or medical treatment, a "triumph of the therapeutic" (Reiff, 1966) permeates North American culture. Its radical empiricism fosters the idea that malaise and malignancy alike, real or imagined, may be professionally and/or scientifically diagnosed and treated.

Three areas are cogent to the relationship of behaviorism and MCE. Two involve adult education directly: instructional technique and research methodology. The third entails broader political significance in adult education as a delivery system for the therapeutic future.

The teacher's principle role, through behaviorist learning theory, rests in properly arranging contingencies of reinforcement. This sometimes peripheral responsibility stands behind frequent claims that behaviorist designs, like CBE, are learner-centered, accountable, and thus humanistic. Hence, Dubin and Okun (1973:3) present B.F. Skinner as an advocate that "the most effective (learning) method is not to reinforce the response rather than punishing the individual for making the response." Such subsequent developments as programmed instruction, totally willed over to logical-positivist paradigms, permit autodidactics, accentuating what Elias and Merriam (1980:88) describe as the "active rather than passive" student role in behaviorist-based education.

At issue is who determines behaviors to be performed, and who selects criteria and mechanics for evaluation. MCE controls frequency and amounts of learning, sundering intentions for real self-pacing. Not only is it difficult to account for chance outcomes, but "tacit dimensions" of knowledge (Polanyi, 1966) are muted.

By controlling relative importance of outcomes, one "school of thought" in an MCE-impacted profession may rationalize the discarding of another. Ridden by stasis, the quest for certainty constructs an illusion of certainty (Dewey, 1929).

As with the dominant thrust of current educational research, educational practice languishes in the grips of behaviorist paradigms. Through MCE, adult education yields its essence --the voluntary prerequisite of successful self-directed learning. Usual adult education measurement efforts now emphasize quantity rather than quality in such matters as retention and participation. Locus of control becomes external to the learner. Methodology becomes external to both researcher and the researched (Hall, 1976; Williams, 1977; Matkin, 1980).

Domination and robotization of adult learners represents a political act. Marcuse (1955: 4) observed with irony that "intensified progress seems to be bound up with intensified unfreedom." A "performance principle" envelops motivation, stratifying society "according to the competitive economic performances of its members." While no longer necessary for survival or progress, and while not required to assure competence or opportunity for learning, domination persists, in the form of "surplus repression" (Marcuse, 1955:34). Hence, MCE becomes overkill, choking off that which was never really shown not to be working.

VI.

There must be some way out of here
Said the joker to the thief
Too much confusion
I can't get no relief
Businessmen they drink my wine
Plowmen dig my earth
But none of them along the line
Know what any of it is worth

-Bob Dylan-

What are the alternatives? Some would say the ball is now in the court of those who must prove MCE non-essential to maintaining competence, warding off obsolescence, and correcting improper behavior. Yet what reasons have there been to doubt the efficacy of voluntary adult education? Research by Tough (1971, 1977) amassed evidence of frequency and effectiveness of self-planned voluntary learning efforts. Apps (1980:7) contends that voluntary participation in continuing professional education will actually benefit universities by "assuring the professional of high-quality teaching and well-run programs." Non-MCE approaches to non-traditional study (Rockhill, 1976; Kuramoto, 1978) offer the real non-traditional student responsibility, not a new compartment in the same old higher education-credentializing paradigm. In the nursing profession, for example, Forni (1975) and Dougan (1980) have detailed such alternatives to MCE as individual contract learning, peer review, audits, and problem-oriented nursing records.

The challenge is not to mandate or control, but to expand opportunities for voluntary learning. Opportunity for many is blocked by inequitable distribution of tax write-offs, or simple lack of funds. Common entitlements for all, professional and inmate alike, are overdue. Regarding consumerism, the old challenges are in protecting and compensating victims, in advocacy. The new challenge is in enhancing chances to volunteer for learning consumer competence and skills in traversing the waters of the imperfect world with which we have been blessed.

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# MCE and the Knowledge Explosion

**by HELEN E. PARRIS**

The rate of change continues to accelerate in modern, industrial societies. New knowledge generated in every occupation both fuels and reflects the general condition of continuous change. In the whirlwind of new scientifically-derived procedures, techniques, and processes, professionals find it almost impossible to keep abreast in their respective fields. Yet they must keep abreast to remain accountable to the public. Since it is doubtful they will do so voluntarily, mandatory continuing education (MCE) is essential.

This type of argument, typically used to justify MCE, is based on what economist, Walter Weisskopf, calls "technical reasoning"—a value-empty, narrow-gaged mode of thinking prevalent in modern society. What is the link between the acquisition of new knowledge and accountability? How is mandated education related to accountability? What is accountability? Without critical analysis of accountability as a desired outcome of continuing education it is impossible to know what contributes to it or how to recognize or apply it in day-to-day practice.

What is apparent in technically-reasoned MCE arguments is an urgent need for adjustment to an

external situation over which the professional has no control: a knowledge explosion. MCE must serve as a means to avoid the undesirable consequences of failure to cope with the growth of knowledge. With its instrumental goal of keeping afloat, MCE is akin to rowing a boat in heavy seas, too preoccupied with each on-coming wave to question the direction of shore. In such a predicament it is the rowing that counts; the more the better.

To hold accountability as a valid end of continuing education, as it should be, professionals need to breathe meaning into the term: they must do so by relating accountability to the public interest, defining that interest and discerning the kinds of knowledge, attitudes and competencies necessary to serve it. They might mutually agree upon standards of accountability which they believe to be 'good,' and 'socially beneficial.' Deriving commonly held standards does not imply a search for universal truths but rather for that which seems true and valid within a given social reality at a particular historical moment. They might also examine the knowledge explosion as a social phenomenon: What purpose do these new techniques, facts, or ideas serve? Whom do they benefit? What are some of the possible consequences of their application?

Professionals might even explore pathways to accountability advocated by the late E.F. Schumacher who maintained, "You can understand other beings only to the extent that you know yourself." (1977:83) Schumacher believed that through scientific observation one can learn things visible through the senses such as the outer appearances of other persons. But science cannot deal adequately with invisible thoughts. To know things of higher significance, such as how others feel when they cannot express their feelings, one must apply understanding or insight which is gained through attentive exploration of one's own inner life.

These are just a few of the ways accountability might be approached as a desired outcome of education. Unfortunately, in our modern world the application of goal-oriented, encompassing reason has given way to a mechanistic search for appropriate means to cope with immediate problems emerging from the status quo. Perhaps to the mandaters of continuing education, and most other institutional decision-makers, encompassing reason seems irrational, a pastime for poets. Or the idea may be totally outside their comprehension.

Industrialization created the conditions for the eclipse of encompassing reason. Advanced industrial civilization stresses the satisfaction of subjectively-derived wants, the maximization of individual self-interest in the pursuit of ever higher material standards. What counts is material progress generated, in large measure, by science and technology. When science and technology become ends for their own sake, reason is reduced to one of its parts: cognitive reason. The cognitive aspect of reason is essential to and inseparable from the attainment of technical advance.

Industrialization also provided fertile ground for individualism. Esteemed today, or until recently, are those high achieving persons who must excel in competition and who need constant challenges to prove their worth. Persons with a need for achievement are noted for their zeal in initiating or applying new processes, ideas techniques in their enterprises. To them satisfaction is found, not so much in work itself, but in the feedback they get from their relentless efforts to succeed. Feedback tells high achievers how well they are doing. Successful innovation increases productivity which leads to money and status—both potent sources of feedback.

When a significant number of persons in a society view work as a game played for high socio/economic stakes and when modernization is elevated to an ideology, the pace of change quickens; new knowledge explodes. All too often knowledge generated under these conditions is depersonalized, compartmentalized, and diffused without concern for its social consequences.

High achievement motivation and cognitive reason—both valued indicators of modernization—march in step to the rhythm of the industrial order. All but forgotten are other once-valued aspects of reason such as the emotional, experiential, aesthetic. Yet it is these aspects, along with the cognitive, that enable human beings to transcend their narrow, immediate surroundings, to cooperate at higher levels of understanding, and to agree upon ends that provide life with meaning. Only with emotional, experiential, and aesthetic reason intact can we relate to others as whole, integrated human beings. Surely these are the key sources from which authentic professional accountability springs.

Professionals need the kind of continuing education that affords them an opportunity to apply all aspects of reason in their respective fields. They need open-ended discussions in which they can evaluate for themselves what contributes to accountability. They need opportunities to assess the desirability of change rather than merely adapt to instrumental changes.

Can this kind of encompassing continuing education (ECE) be mandated? Based on present experience with MCE the possibility seems remote. In MCE, answers to important questions are known in advance by experts. In ECE, participants themselves reflect upon the kinds of knowledge that should pass through their professional gate. New knowledge is treated neither with unquestioned acceptance nor unconditional doubt. It is evaluated critically, its possible consequences assessed before setting priorities.

In MCE, knowledge is packaged and transfered from educator to educatee. Agendas are easily managed; their outcomes predictable. In ECE, knowledge is gained through shared insights in a process of dynamic interaction. Agendas are difficult to manage; their outcomes unpredictable.

By its very nature the encompassing approach contradicts the notion of compulsion. But even if this kind of education could be mandated, who among the proponents of MCE would take it to heart? It challenges the value-empty reasoning around which much of MCE is developed. It undermines the institutional foundations of those who are in the business of coping with the knowledge explosion.

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# Western Democracy and MCE

**by ROBERT A. CARLSON**

It has not been generally understood that Western liberal-social democracy depends as much upon adult education as upon our political structures. It is not the ten percent of formal adult education upon which democracy depends. Rather, it depends upon the ninety percent of adult education which includes deliberate, self-planned education, non-formal institutional adult education, and what professors of continuing education are wont incorrectly to term incidental or accidental adult education.

The vast majority of adult education in our society is carried out in an often unorganized, unplanned situation by peers, poets, propagandists, priests, peddlers, politicians, publishers, pamphleteers, playwrights, publicans, and practitioners of the performing and plastic arts. Some of the most important education is conducted by non-formal institutions of adult education such as voluntary agencies, government agencies, anti-government agencies, religious groups, political parties, professional associations, business organizations, and trade union organizations.

These organizations are crucial to the preservation of Western liberal-social democracy. They are self-interest groups which urge their economic, political, or ideological interests upon the public for general acceptance. These organizations provide programs varying from the promotion of socialism to the promotion of capitalism; from promotion of one particular church organization to the promotion of atheism; from the promotion of birth control to the opposition to most aspects of the birth control movement. This sublimated warfare, conducted by means of adult education through these non-formal agencies is crucial to democratic freedom. This openness and struggle distinguish Western liberal-social democracy from the totalitarian, monolithic power of the state that prevails in most of the people's democracies of the Communist world.

If you will accept this analysis of the importance of adult education, it becomes a matter of some concern when the concept of compulsion arises in the adult education sector in the West. Mandatory Continuing Education is quite compatible with totalitarianism; it is out of place altogether in liberal-social democracy.

Yet, MCE has become more and more of a panacea for more and more interests in the West that seek public support for this form of totalitarianism. Are ecological difficulties threatening economic commitments in various areas? MCE can be advocated as a means of gradually teaching people to adjust their values to the needs of the elitist business and bureaucratic community.

Is it difficult for public authorities to handle a community problem such as traffic safety? Judges can avoid problems by sentencing those committing 'minor' traffic offences to safe-driving courses rather than punishments intended for criminals. And the public is reassured that the traffic safety problem is well in hand. Everybody is happy, and nobody has to address the basic issue of a legal system that hasn't even caught up yet with what is a rapidly obsolescent automotive age.

Welfare recipients can be forced to attend classes in order to receive their checks. MCE can be viewed as the means of tooling or retooling such people for gainful employment. Never mind structural unemployment—that there are not enough jobs to go around. Blame can be put on welfare recipients who 'refuse' to 'find jobs' despite the mandatory training received.

Are professionals so miseducated that they are failing to keep up-to-date with developments in their fields of practice, as some consumer advocates allege? Mandatory Continuing Education can take the consumer heat off the profession while the professionals take the costs of their compulsory classes off their income taxes and enjoy their favorite leisure-time activities in the surroundings of a posh educational facility. Here is the ultimate panacea that contends urbanely with populist totalitarianism. MCE can consist of professionally controlled programs offering serious alternative approaches (if any profession can be so democratic), tasteful appointments, interesting recreational activities, removal of public pressure, and a tax deduction to boot—all of which can assuage the distress of a mandatory educational experience.

But they cannot overcome the fact that informal, voluntary adult education undergirds Western democracy. And wherever compulsion is applied in adult education, no matter how important the particular interest alleges the compulsion to be in the particular case and no matter how grand the educational experience may be for those involved, our democracy has drained from it a little bit more of its life blood.

# Literature Review of Research on MCE for Professionals

**by PHYLLIS M. CUNNINGHAM and JAMES HAWKING**

Mandatory education for adults is a concept that has only recently emerged to any extent in the literature of adult education. It is defined as education which is required of an adult to either maintain certification or licensure in a vocational pursuit or to meet/avoid requirements for a social reward/punishment. To date, the center of compulsory adult education is found in either professional or legal requirements for relicensure or continued certification of professionals, thus the term mandatory continuing education is associated primarily with continuing

professional education. However, many adult educators, ideologically allied with the deschooling movement of Ivan Illich, prefer to broaden the term to include such mandated requirements as returning to school as a prerequisite for social welfare services or as a deferred punishment for social deviancy to avoid incarceration. This literature review is confined to the narrower definition, mandatory continuing professional education (MCPE).

During the late sixties and early seventies a number of professions in various states came under the control of legislation requiring proof of continuing education activity. Prior to this time education was a major that varied from other professions in that advanced course work or degrees have systematically been required for maintaining employment or advancement. Similarly, osteopathy, since 1943, has had a model of continuing education which was not separated from its pre-service education and was mandated, not by the state, but by the professional association (Cover, 1978). Within the medical profession, the Academy of Family Physicians which instituted MCPE requirements of 150 hours in 1947 as prerequisite for continued membership also was a unique situation (Frederich, 1976). In most professions, however, MCPE did not emerge until later.

In 1967 the Oregon Medical Association adopted similar mandated requirements as the Academy of Family Physicians, and in the next ten years eleven more state medical associations and six national medical specialty groups made Continuing Medical Education (CME) compulsory (Frederich, 1976). By 1971, New Mexico passed the first state law which required CME for medical relicensure (Derbyshire, 1971). In 1971 California passed legislation requiring continuing education for the relicensure of nurses beginning in 1974 (McGriff, 1972). The Iowa State Board of Accounting, in 1969, issued regulations for relicensure of CPA's which required 120 hours of continuing education every three years (Leete and Loeb, 1975). Similarly in veterinary medicine, law, dentistry, and pharmacy, mandated continuing education legislation began appearing in various states. What began as a trickle of state legislation for MCPE in the early seventies has grown in ten years to a steady stream. Phillips reported legislation now exists, either in practice or in the form of enabling legislation, in every state which affects sixteen professions (Watkins, Sept. 4, 1977). Thus we see in the very short history of MCPE an explosive growth in its acceptance, at least by state legislatures.

## Attitudes about MCPE

The mandatory part of CPE has stirred lively debates within the professions affected, as well as among the educators of adults. Several studies have attempted to document professionals' attitudes towards MCPE. Two-thirds of the sample of 1,000 CPA's belonging to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants in a 1972 survey favored mandatory continuing education in the accounting profession. These results were based on a response rate of 38 per cent and are tempered by the caveat that the alternative to CPE which was posed, re-examination for licensure, was strongly opposed by approximately 85 per cent. Thirty per cent of those responding had not attended any CPE activities within the last year (Bremer and Strawser, 1972).

A representative random national survey of 400 lawyers (52 per cent response rate) indicated that 56 per cent of those responding did not favor the proposal that attorneys should be required to demonstrate CPE attendance. Only 33 per cent thought that MCPE should be a condition precedent to the right to practice and 75 per cent indicated that they oppose re-examination in lieu of a CPE requirement (Leete and Loeb, 1975). In a survey of 600 dentists from New York State, fifty per cent of those responding favored MCE (Caferetta, 1978). From a random sample of 150, drawn from a pool of 2,297 doctors of the Iowa Medical Society and with a response rate of 79 per cent, 71 per cent of those responding indicated that they expected CPE to become mandatory. No information was sought regarding the respondents' attitude toward that requirement (Caplon, 1973).

In a study of hospital administrators by means of a stratified random sample of 706 hospitals listed by the American Hospital Association, 64 per cent favored MCE. Interestingly, when the respondents were asked to judge the impact of MCE on their future effectiveness, over one-third indicated that there would be no improvement with MCE, and about 50 per cent more expected a moderate increase in effectiveness. The interpretation of the investigator was that the administrators may have felt that MCPE was "a sign of the times" and thus favored MCPE despite the limited benefits perceived (Boissoneaur, 1979).

In a regional sample of midwestern nurses attending a continuing education program, attitudes were examined regarding MCPE. In this non-representative sample, 74 per cent of the nurses thought that each profession should set and enforce its own standards while 55 per cent indicated that they opposed governmental control to set and enforce standards (Skipper and King, 1974). In a more rigorous study of nurses' attitudes regarding MCE in a representational sample (229) of the Boston area, respondents were asked to respond on a Likert Scale to several facets of CPE. Ninety-five per cent of those returning the survey (50 per cent) were highly supportive of CPE while 69 per cent disagreed that nurses should assume the financial obligation of CPE. These nurses held less favorable attitudes towards MCPE with 50 per cent agreeing that mandated continuing education was appropriate for nurses even to the point that it should be required for relicensure. While 50 per cent indicated that they favored MCPE, only 25 per cent felt that other nurses would look favorably on this point. On further analysis of the four semantic differential scales contained in the instrument (one way ANOVA), it was determined that younger nurses, with fewer years of experience, nurses who have a bachelors degree, and nurses who belong to the American Nurses Association endorse mandated CPE to a significantly higher degree than those who were not characterized by these variables. Further, in a step-wise multiple regression procedure, age and ANA membership were shown to be the best predictive variables, although only 14 per cent of the variance was accounted for by those two variables (Larocco and Palit, 1978).

Studying the attitudes of nurses in two states,

one with MCPE (California) and one without (Michigan), a random sample of 500 nurses from each state was drawn. Survey data were collected including a measure of locus of control and role perception. A majority of nurses from both states favored MCPE. Nurses from California were significantly more favorable towards MCPE than those in Michigan and reported a shift towards a more favorable attitude in the six years in which they had experienced the mandated legislation. Locus of control was not predictive of attitude towards MCPE, although selected personal and professional variables, as well as role perceptions labeled institutional and personal, were significantly predictive of a positive attitude towards MCPE (Pituch, 1979). In a similar state survey (Kansas) with a population of 1539 newly licensed nurses, Donald reported that Baccalaureate degree nurses held significantly higher favorable attitudes towards MCPE (865) than did Associate degree nurses (70%). Age and positive attitudes towards MCPE were negatively correlated. These findings associated either length of time in school or type of school as well as being younger with positive attitudes towards MCPE (Donald, 1979).

It would appear on the basis of these limited data that MCPE, in and by itself, may be seen by most professionals as a good strategy, perhaps an attitude more strongly held by nurses than by CPA's, doctors, or lawyers. However, the low return rate and the nature of the methodology (survey) in most of these studies severely limit the interpretation. In the more carefully done studies, socialization, both institutional and societal, appear to be potentially interesting variables. Clearly MCPE is seen as the lesser of two evils when compared to recertification or relicensure, thus the threat of some kind of control or the seemingly ubiquitous nature of MCPE also seem to be salient variables to be studied. The fact that in the Larrocco study only 25 per cent of the 50 per cent of the sample who favored MCPE felt that other nurses would favor it indicates the possibility of a "social desirability" effect affecting the responses.

There were no reports found on any systematic study of the attitudes of adult educators towards MCPE within their own profession or in terms of their philosophy regarding adult continuing education as it is practiced in other professions. What is clear is that while one can find avid proponents for MCPE among professions which have licensure or certification requirements (McGriff, 1972, Derbyshire, 1971, Francis, 1979), there were no strong polemics for MCPE found in the adult education literature. Adult education professors writing on the subject of MCPE are overwhelmingly against compulsion (Ohliger and Lisman, 1978; Williams, 1974; Rockhill, 1979; Apps, 1980; Carlson, 1979; Thomas, 1977; Gueulette, 1976; Heaney, 1980). Knox and Houle, though against MCPE, are more moderate in their opposition making the point that MCPE may be a transitional strategy until a more perfect way can be found to insure performance (Knox, 1975, Houle, 1980). Knowles appears to endorse MCPE if voluntary means fail, because "a professional organization has a responsiblity to assure that its members engage in CPE." (Knowles as quoted in "Second Thoughts," 1979).

Except for the Journal, Setting the Pace, the Illinois Adult Education Association's publication, which devotes an issue to the subject of MCPE and the newsletter "Second Thoughts" published by Basic Choices, Inc., there has been little discussion of the broad issues of MCPE for practitioners of adult education. An excellent, substantive Conference Procedures which addresses

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the topic of MCPE was produced by the University of Illinois, but unfortunately distribution was limited (Moore, 1976). The National University Extension Association has also dealt with the MCPE issue, but the debate there tends to focus on the concerns of the politics of provision rather than the broader philosophical concerns of the nature of the adult learner and adult education.

It is in the literature of the professional journals where the widely available intensive debates are found and one can read thoughtful and not so thoughtful discussions on the pros and cons of MCPE. Thoughful presentations can be found in nursing (Cooper, 1972; Stevens, 1973), engineering (Shunberg, 1977; French, 1978), medicine (Fredericks, 1978; Brown and Uhl, 1970; Relman, 1979), and law (O'Donnell, 1976; Wollsen, 1975; Abernethy, 1976). Across these professions the issues, either pro or con, tend to center on the potential problems of obsolescense or the threat of relicensure/recertification or at times on the philosophical problems of the nature of the profession or professional responsibility. There appears to be more criticism of the reliance on MCPE to cure the obsolescense problem the longer the profession has experienced mandated education, resulting in the promoting of voluntary CPE apart from the issues of competence. Within medicine the debate appears to have moved to the essential problem of dealing with competency or performance by exploring innovative assessment methods for relicensure. Another explanation for the appearance of increased criticism of MCPE could be that opponents tend to be the more vocal on the subject than proponents.

### Impact Considerations

Laying the philosophical concerns aside, another side of the discussion focuses on trying to demonstrate the connection between CPE and improved performance. The profession which has done most in this area as reflected in the literature is the medical profession. Miller, a noted advocate of voluntary medical continuing education, points out the lack of research verifying any real improvement as a result of mandatory programs (Miller, 1963). Miller along with Williamson, reports on an experiment conducted to improve doctors' responses to unexpected test abnormalities with 85 per cent of the doctors at a midwestern hospital participating. After a preliminary failure of changing behavior with the traditional classroom approach, the educators achieved a significant improvement in practice

by having the lab staff obscure unusual test results with a piece of tape, thus bringing these results to the attention of the physician. The conclusion drawn from this experiment was that the problem was not an educational issue but rather a problem of busy physicians not noting unusual laboratory findings which did not fall within the parameters of the unexpected diagnosis. Here a change in procedure, rather than education, improved practice, (Williamson, et. al., 1967).

In an impact study covering nine years of continuing professional education in which 57 per cent of all Kansas physicians participated "maternal and perinatal death rates in various areas were found to be unrelated to hours of continuing education in obstetrics and pediatrics taken by local physicians. Similarly, high regional rates for certain operative procedures were not associated with increased use of appropriate post graduate courses." The authors attached no surprise to these findings recognizing that other variables such as socio-economic factors are better predictors of such death rates. It should be noted that these findings are further weakened by the fact that although over half the doctors had participated in CME during the period studied, 7 per cent of all physicians took half of all hours recorded (Lewis and Hassanein, 1970, p 254).

In another study looking for changed medical practice, the number of pap smears ordered by physicians after all doctors in a county in Kentucky participated in a post graduate course on cervical cancer were compared. The mean number of cervical pap smears increased 35 per cent ($p = .01$) over an eight month period for three-fourths of the doctors monitored. Later it was determined that this increase was comparable to the generic increase that year in all counties of Kentucky. The authors concluded that the increase could not be linked to the educational program and posited that the course had not been specific enough in establishing clear cut behavioral objectives (Kane and Bailey, 1971). In a similar study in Texas, a matched group of four medical sites of similar distances from the medical center were compared in which at two of the sites physicians received CPE related to cancer and two did not. Comparing cancer referal rates from all four sites in the year previous and the year following the course, those sites at which physicians received CME had a significantly higher number of referrals ($p = .001$) than those who did not. It was concluded that this difference was the result of the educational experience. An assumption was made that referrals will improve patient care, an assumption which many would find questionable (Mahan, 1978).

A compendium of eight research studies on the impact of CPE on physicians which resulted in improved patient care gives the strongest evidence that well designed programs prepared for a specific audience with identified needs does affect performance (Stein, 1980). It is these types of studies that begin to move away from the simple notion that education generically can be relied on to insure good performance.

Moving from the medical field, a well designed impact study of dentists participating in a voluntary CPE program was reported by Chambers, et al. Visiting teams assessed performance of the dental team both before and after a one day "four handed-sit down" conference. Utilizing a carefully developed rating scheme on ten different criteria, 10 to 79 per cent of the dentists were rated as having improved practice. These findings would have been more impressive had inter-rater reliability been established and if the raters had not also taught the course. Two interesting additional findings were reported. Dentists did not accept the innovations specifically as taught but modified them in some way. These modifications did not come from imperfect knowledge but logical explanations could be advanced by each dentist for them. It was also noted that the dentists were not as aware of their changed behavior as were the observers. When "big changers" were compared to "small changers", all the "big changers" indicated that they were purchasing new equipment and this was part of the motivation for attending the conference. It was concluded that a determined motive to change was a more predictive variable of actual behavior change than the feelings of the dentists as to whether they liked or disliked the course or to any assessment of major obstacles to change as judged by the participants (Chambers, et. al., 1976).

Most of the research reported above on impact evaluation was based on voluntary MCE and the results are not clear cut. Hard data derived from rigorously designed research is at a premium in CPE; studies looking at the effects on professional practice given voluntary as contrasted with mandatory CME are simply not available.

### Participation and MCPE

Turning to the effects of MCPE on participation in CPE programs rather than on impact on practice, a study was done in a four state area on the participation rates of accountants. The four states studied included Iowa which had mandated CPE effective after 1969. Questionnaires were sent to 1,480 CPA's registered in the four states with a response rate of 51 per cent. The average level of participation for those responding in Kansas which has MCE legislation ranked third out of the four states. Minnesota and Kansas CPA's, where CPE was voluntary, reported an average of 10.4 and 9.5 days as compared to Iowa's 8.8 days. Participation rates were requested for the years 1968 through 1970. Iowa CPA's increased their average participation during the 1969-70 period following mandated CPE by .5 days which was lower than South Dakota's increase (1.2 days) but higher than Minnesota (-.5) and Kansas (.1) figures. These data are surprising since one would expect participation to increase only with mandated CPE. The explanation escapes us unless the return rates among the states which was not reported varied a great deal (Smith, et el, 1972).

Stross and Harlan reporting on the effects of MCPE on physicians found that among 394 respondents required to engage in MCPE for relicensure that only 39 per cent stated that the law had increased their participation. Within the total sample tested (505), more than three quarters believed that MCPE was worthwhile but only one third thought that formal testing should be used to assure competence (Stross and Harlan, 1978).

The impact of MCPE on lawyers in Minnesota indicated that under the mandatory rule during the

first year, total attendance at Minnesota State Bar seminars increased 100 per cent (Michalik, 1977). In a nation wide sample of all lawyers in 1976 with a response rate of 30 per cent, it was concluded that virtually every lawyer was aware of continuing legal education programs and that 80 per cent had attended one or more sessions in the preceeding year. The figures for a comparable study in 1962 were 90 per cent and 58 per cent (Unterberger, 1976).

The refusal of a teacher to comply with MCPE presents an interesting case of non-participation. Mary Jane Martin persistently refused to comply with the rule of the Harrah School District that a person with only a BA degree must earn five semester hours of college credit every three years. She was denied increases in salary from 1972-74 based on this refusal. In 1974 Oklahoma passed legislation mandating salary raises to teachers regardless of their compliance with a continuing education policy. Having been denied the sanction previously employed, the school board refused to renew her 1974-75 contract unless she came into compliance. The teacher sued the school board when her contract was terminated seeking relief under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Harrah case went to the Supreme Court which confirmed the lower district court decision that the school board was acting within its rights to impose a sanction since such a sanction was rationally related to the objective of enforcing the continuing education obligation of its teachers (Harrah vs Martin, 1979). This case seemingly supports the point that a public agency can mandate continuing education as a part of employment, a point which many felt would not be supported under the law.

In summary, it appears that participation in CPE does increase under mandates from the state, although there is some evidence that CPE is increasing in some professions under voluntary systems as well. At least in the teaching profession, it seems clear that the Harrah case legitimates the right of a school board to mandate continuing education. Again it has to be emphasized that the concept of mandatory continuing education is linked generically with improved practice, an assumption which can be questioned. In more recent events, "sunset legislation" is causing some MCPE to be dropped from some states, but it is still too early to come to any conclusions of how this reexamination of the legislation will affect the trend toward MCPE.

## Conclusion

After reviewing the literature that pertains to MCPE, our conclusions are limited due to a lack of hard data. It is clear that MCPE has had a surge of popularity among legislators attempting to deal with the issues of protecting the consumer from the malpractice of professionals. It appears that in some cases professionals have supported MCPE either as an alternative to the harsher realities of relicensure or recertification, or, particularly with younger professionals, because they favor it as a way of maintaining competence. There is some evidence to show that professionals who have negative attitudes towards MCPE gain more positive attitudes after experiencing MCPE. In well designed studies in which specific CPE programs are developed to ameliorate specific problems in practice there is evidence that there is improved practice with CPE. However, these studies thus far are based on voluntary participation.

The MCPE literature can be described as descriptive or polemic with most authors lamenting the dearth of hard data which links improved practice with the educational intervention and more specifically improved practice as a result of mandated CPE. The better informed people tend to agree that MCPE is an imperfect approach to the problems of obsolescence. What one suspects is that MCPE is a preferable option to mandatory reexamination for most professionals. If MCPE is ultimately for consumer protection, there is no evidence now available that there is any correlation between MCPE and improved practice.

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# Beyond Research: The Ethics of MCE

**by KATHLEEN ROCKHILL**

When asked if I would be willing to write a position paper on MCE, I automatically said "yes," because I feel so strongly about the issue, not because I had the words or wisdom to convince anyone who does not already believe as I do. Three years ago I developed a fairly lengthy position paper, "In Opposition to Mandatory Continuing Education" which is finally to be published as a chapter in the forthcoming book, Issues in Adult Education, by Jossey-Bass. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the meeting of your task force, nor will I be able to attend AEA in the Fall. Hence, I would like to take this opportunity to briefly present some of my thoughts.

Every time I tackle this issue I feel I am confronting the money changers at the temple. Realistically speaking, I don't know if there is anything we can do to turn back the movement that Milton Stern has so aptly labelled "the Gold Rush of '76." There are big bucks and status for "marginal" adult educators, beseiged educational institutions and eager entrepreneurs. For adult educators at last they have a "captured clientele" to offset the unpredictability of operating under the limitations of the enrollment economy; the nightmarish picture that Burton Clark paints of diffuse goals and a squeamish service mentality give way to respectability and predictability. Though I see the predictable consequences of institutionalized mass education as the much greater nightmare, I don't know how to convince the money changers, and it is in their hands that the power of AEA rests.

I once thought that research was the answer, and vowed not to tackle the issue of mandated education until we had more information as to its consequences. I would still like to see some studies conducted, but as I list my questions, I feel that I already know a good bit of the answers -- and am not exactly optimistic that even if I could carefully prove what I already, through experience and intuition, know to be true -- or false for that matter -- anyone would listen. We can even cite research to show that policy is never based upon research findings. Regardless, I urge AEA to lobby for research on the development and effects of mandated education as a top priority for NIE, USOE, and Foundations who've so recently discovered the existence of adult education. I would stress the following areas of inquiry:

1. How does forcing people to participate in educational programs affect teaching and learning? (Do people learn best under voluntary or involuntary conditions?)
2. What are the effects of mandated education upon the quality of programs provided?

3. Are there class biases in mandated education? What are the problems of access and opportunity?
4. What are the vested interests, political and economic, in mandating education?
5. What is the relationship between education and competence?
6. How can quality programs be provided in which people will voluntarily choose to participate?

The last question is our greatest challenge. One of my principal concerns about mandating education is that we will never even face the challenge. With time I've come to accept that the question is not so much one of research as it is one of morality. I believe that it is wrong to force people into learning situations. I hate being forced to learn, and I seriously doubt that anyone can really be forced to learn that which they do not want -- we cannot control what is learned, only what is mimicked back to us. When I ask people about their learning under mandated conditions, they overwhelmingly respond with their disdain for such situations. True, there are a few who get turned on in the process to something new or who are given permission to do what would otherwise not be allowed, but I do not believe that these few souls are worth the cost of so many others. As a teacher, I despise teaching under mandated conditions. I know of no more difficult group to face than the teachers of adults in California who are required to participate in a series of courses in order to earn their teaching credential. In trying to reach everybody we fail to provide the on-site individualized resources that might really make a difference.

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Ethics are supposed to be at the very core of concern for professional associations. I think it is time that AEA took this responsibility seriously, and I think it has a moral obligation to oppose the further development of mandatory adult education. My arguments are twofold:

1. The principal of voluntarism is fundamental to adult education.
2. Mandating education will sabotage efforts to improve professional competence.

The voluntary character of adult education has long been acclaimed to be the greatest asset of the field. In my historical research I found that the advantages of voluntarism ran throughout archival materials and published literature as a recurring theme: teachers emphasized the delights of teaching people who wanted to learn, students spoke of the joy of having the opportunity to learn what they wanted, and administrators reckoned with the mighty power of an audience that would "vote with its feet" -- as they saw it, they had no choice but to provide quality programs or they would face empty classrooms. Then too, whether we agree with their choices or not, adults usually want the power to make their own choices and greatly resent it when that power is taken away from them. The resentment at being forced to give up precious weekends or evenings, pay high fees and listen to what they have limited control over sets in motion a negative atmosphere toward learning that is very difficult to overcome. As a teacher I find myself again and again confronted with resistant voices proclaiming "I've heard this all before," or "that's not relevant;" refusing to give an inch, these voices can turn even willing learners off. True, there are those who do not care about having power over their learning and even resist having it, much preferring to passively do what they are told and "get the requirements out of the way." Personally, I find this requirement mentality very frustrating and one of the greatest resistances to meaningful learning, and we have research study upon study to prove the importance of active involvement of the learner for effective learning to occur.

If the above rings true for any of you, it is easy to see how mandated education will sabotage efforts to improve professional competence. It is my contention that mandated mass programs will result in inferior educational opportunities: The incentives to provide quality for any but those who can afford to pay premium prices will be gone; required learners are reluctant learners; it is virtually impossible, under mass conditions, to provide for very individualized and highly varied learning needs. We do not know for sure what the relationship between education and competence is, but experience suggests that the more individualized and integrated into one's work situation and learning style the better, a difficult and costly business that mass mandated programs will not resolve. My concern is that they will present the illusion of doing so, thereby sabotaging efforts to work toward the reality -- namely that quality education which can truly promote improved professional competence and thereby further professional accountability is going to be a difficult and expensive undertaking, and I've yet to hear discussion as to who is prepared to pick up the bill. Mass mandated programs are an easy and cheap response, an illusionary solution to the very complex problems of professional competence and accountability. Once the illusion is accepted as reality and the mass enterprise established, vested interests will maintain the institutions as they are, thereby sabotaging efforts to confront the difficulties of providing for quality learning for all adults. Research comparing the relative quality of voluntary and mandaced programs would be helpful, but I can't help but think that we have only to look at the pitfalls in compulsory education for youth to know the tremendous risk we are undertaking as we move toward mass mandated education for adults. It can well mean the demise of adult education as an innovative, exciting area of educational endeavor.

Accepting the ethical argument, the question becomes one of action. AEA can play an influential role in stemming the tide toward mandated education while promoting the interests of providing quality voluntary learning opportunities. As suggested, it can take an ethical stance in opposition to mandated education and it can

lobby for research into the effects of compulsory education for adults. It can lobby for the economic resources essential to effective programming, refusing to accept the blackmail of forcing people to pay for programs they must attend in order to work. It can also provide an influential rallying point for administrators, teachers and students to organize in lobbying for the support of the most essential and best programs. This last is particularly important — students and teachers are a potentially powerful voice that we must find ways to listen to and help to organize for action.

# Curing Failure with Failure: MCE for the Poor

**by AIMEE I. HORTON**

Our most persistent failure in adult education has been in reaching and effectively responding to the educational needs of the poor in our society, the young and older poor, minority and white poor, the poor in our cities and in rural areas. We have failed, in large part, at every level from adult basic education to post-secondary education.

High drop-out rates — 25 to 49 percent in the first five weeks — are reported by many ABE teachers in urban areas in a major national study in the'70's (Mezirow, 1975, 68). Government job-training programs for the disadvantaged provide another bleak picture. They have been experiencing an average 25% "success" rate (Gehl, 1974). A recent in depth study of a demonstration program involving groups of women in a public job program revealed that it did manage to provide transition from welfare to work for one-third of the women and was "a fairly positive experience" for another third, but "no changes occurred in their lives of welfare dependence" (Danziger, 1980, 43).

In terms of higher education, Fred Harvey Harrington, distinguished historian and educational advisor to the Ford Foundation, concludes in a national study, " . . . it is painfully evident that postsecondary education, like the rest of the college and university enterprise, has done more for those at the top than for those at the bottom." Noting that the "truly disadvantaged" have been "thinly represented" whether among credit, non-credit, television or other categories of students, he warns, "What this means is that adult education has widened rather than narrowed the gap between the well-to-do and the poor" (Harrington, 1977, 157).

Research over the years to identify and examine these failures suggests that they are pervasive and complex. They relate to ourselves, to our institutions and to our society. They relate, for example, to our failure as educators and the failure of our educational institutions to understand and deal with the way of thinking, background and values of workers, the working poor and the poor on welfare. As London pointed out in a study of attitudes toward adult education and social class, "When workers and their children suffer a loss of respect and self-esteem as a result of their experience in school, they tend to shun existing opportunities for education" (London, 1963, 228).

They relate to a widespread,dependency-producing view of the poor among adult educators and other professionals whereby "problems of inequality and poverty are conventionally redefined as problems of effort and opportunity and the corrective measures are prescribed." The corrective measures, in turn, typically involve a "service strategy" in which a program is devised involving "the poor as clients or beneficiaries of trained, paid practitioners as the 'engines' of change" (Gronbjerg et al., 1978, 146).

The failures in the case of job-training programs have been found to relate not only to the programs themselves - the failures of most job-training programs to reach, hold or effectively rehabilitate trainees - but within the changing, narrowing job market to the inability of program graduates to find well-paying and meaningful jobs (Zalinger, 1969, 5-13).

Other studies have sought to examine and document programs which "work." In a wide-ranging historical analysis of when and under what circumstances the poor have become involved in adult education, Warren Haggstrom concludes:

> . . . when the poor are caught up in a social movement which drastically questions the bases of their lives, many of them develop an intense and far-ranging thirst for knowledge. When the poor are inducted into a less sweeping social action effort, they maintain a desire for education, but the scope becomes correspondingly narrowed. Finally, when the poor are not caught up in social action at all, only those with sufficient ongoing activity in their private lives are likely to seek skill and knowledge energetically (Haggstrom, 1965, 149).

He cites as major examples from the nineteenth century the eagerness for learning among working people in England in times of political ferment and among struggling Midwestern farmers in the Farmers Alliance. He might have cited more recent examples of Southern workers in the industrial union movement of the '30's and '40's and Southern blacks in the civil rights movement of the '50's and '60's whose participation in residential adult education programs of the Highlander Folk School grew as they came together to work for basic economic and social change (Horton, 1971).

There are, of course, other kinds of non-traditional institutions, programs and classrooms in various parts of the country, some documented, some yet-to-be documented, which reach and respond to those least adequately served by traditional education (for example, see Heaney, 1980).

Yet, clearly, most of our present programs which seek to relate to the poor are not working. Clearly, studies of our failures suggest a need to basically re-think our social and educational attitudes, programs and approaches to the poor. However, there are those among us, many of whom

are in decision-making positions within the adult education/social welfare/job training bureaucracy who subscribe to the "failed learner" theory. If the programs are not working, are not reaching and holding the adult poor, make them mandatory!

Implicit in this solution, however well-intentioned, is a lack of faith in and respect for the capacities for growth of motivated adults, especially disadvantaged adults. This attitude was spelled out very forthrightly in "A Study to Determine the Literacy Level of Able-bodied Persons Receiving Public Assistance" as carried out in a Southside community in Chicago. The study recommends:

> Just as the child is expected to attend classes — so also the 'child adult' must be expected to meet his responsibility to the community. In short, 'social uplifting' — even if begun on the adult level — cannot expect to meet with success unless it is combined with a certain amount of 'social disciplining' just as it is on the pre-adult level (Blackboard Jungle, 1962, 102).

Ironically, the authors of this study chose as their "well-tested model" for compulsory education of the poor our public school system. We have abundant and tragic human data on the "drop-outs," the "push-outs" and those who "graduate" but are unable to function: the youth on our inner city streets who are products of mandatory education.

If we believe that adults can continue to learn, then let us as adult educators learn from our failures and the failures of others in American education. Let us, working with alienated groups of poor people, develop new kinds of programs which relate to their life problems and aspirations.

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# A Voice from the Field

**by DIANA M. CARMINATI**

I first met David at a small group meeting at the office of the local CETA sponsor. He was on a youth slot and worked at a local day care as janitor, handyman and van driver. He let me know immediately that he was only there because his counsellor told him to be there.

That first day he just sat quietly and toyed with a math survey that others were doing. I made it clear when I talked with him that it was unfortunate that he was forced to attend, that I had no investment in him being there, but if he could think of something he wanted to learn to do, I would help. The next week he didn't come to the group. That was eight weeks ago.

Since then, David has been a regular member of the group and has been vocal about when and where the group should meet and what we should do. He has identified goals for himself and has begun to share what he knows and what he doesn't.

Robert was in his early thirties when first approached by a tutor. A non-reader, he was somewhat hesitant about working with a tutor. But as the woman he lived with had referred him, and urged him to participate he agreed to give it a try.

Initially he kept his appointments, but did nothing between sessions. He then began missing sessions and finally quit altogether.

Several months later a chance meeting with Robert found him in possession of a car, and the conversation got around to his need for a Vermont license. At that point the tutor offered to help and Robert re-entered the Program, prepared for and got his license, and went on to learn how to fill out job applications.

Floyd was in his 50's when he was referred to the Program by his employer. The employer felt that Floyd's inability to write intelligibly was a handicap on the job. Floyd did not share his employer's opinion and decided not to participate in the Program.

Paul was in his early twenties when he was referred to the Program by his Probation Officer. It was evident from a conversation with the officer that his investment in Paul's education did not go beyond discovering whether or not Paul could have written a false bill of sale. Paul's interest did not go beyond pleasing his Probation Officer. Paul's participation in the Program began minimally and then faded.

These four cases are not atypical of the thousands of men and women that have come in contact with the Vermont Adult Basic Education Program. To the contrary these cases are all too

typical. Typical to the point where an experienced tutor can predict that he/she has four to six weeks to help an individual that was referred by a group, agency etc., to identify an immediate, self-important goal and take charge of his/her own learning process. Beyond that initial period people that have not identified goals and taken charge of their learning are more apt to leave the Program, or participate marginally.

The need for participant oriented and originated learning is particularly evident in a home-based tutoring situation, for within the home environment there is not even the slightest pretext of a classroom or curricula. The tutor and the learner are in fact enmeshed in the stuff of the learner's life. All the learner's life skill needs are at hand. There may be mail that needs attention, a report from school that can not be understood, a checkbook or budget that needs work, a job application that needs to be filled out or fresh garden produce that needs to be canned. Surrounded by these needs they become the only justifiable curricula for our Program and for the rural people we meet.

Both the case studies cited earlier and the Program's commitment to home-based learning are concrete evidence of the need for voluntary learning. Evidence backed by experiences that have shown us that adults will either actively demand control of their learning, or passively refuse to participate in a Program that will not recognize and address their self-defined needs. We, in Vermont, faced with these facts have stopped presupposing we know better, and have set ourselves up as a response mechanism for the people that know best - the participant.

In conclusion it warrants saying that we, as a Program and as individuals within a Program, are not attempting anything unique. We are only trying to provide a learning environment for other adults that we would demand for ourselves. The fact that most of the adults in the Program are functionally illiterate does not change the fact that they are adults, that they demand respect and that they know what they need to learn to function more effectively or perhaps comfortably in their own environment. It then follows logically that if adults know what they need to learn, they also know when they need to learn it.

As educators we have assumed the responsibility of providing opportunities to learn, and are challenged to create systems and techniques that best suit our particular target populations. We can not be in the business of inflicting learning for learning is an internal process controlled by the person doing the learning. We can not make someone learn, and from that viewpoint mandatory education is a misnomer. We can mandate participation, we can dangle jobs and training like a carrot to entreat participants, but we can not mandate learning, and all the aphorisms in the world are not going to change or disguise that fact. Isn't it time we focused our resources on what we can do and leave moot points to casual conversation?